

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 225448

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTONJR:MAR

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

P:PCHABIB

S/S O: SESTEINER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 225448

EXDIS - FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG, US

SUBJECT: ISRAELI ACTION IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF: CAIRO 12263

1. CAIRO REFTEL RECEIVED FOLLOWING TRANSMITTAL OF INSTRUCTIONS ON YOUR RESPONSE TO RABIN PROPOSAL ABOUT COOLING OFF PERIOD, WHICH YOU SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED BY NOW. YOU SHOULD SEE RABIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND CONVEY THE FOLLOWING TO HIM:

A. FIRST, DESCRIBE TO RABIN THE INCIDENT AS DESCRIBED TO US BY AMOCO IN PARA 1 OF CAIRO REFTEL.

B. TELL RABIN WE WERE ENCOURAGED BY HIS PRAGMATIC APPROACH AND ALSO BY THE CALMING TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE STATEMENT REPORTED IN TEL AVIV 6230. AS HE WILL SEE FROM YOUR INSTRUCTIONS IN SEPTTEL, WE HAVE RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO HIS PROPOSALS WHICH WE ARE HOPEFUL

SECRET

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PAGE 02 STATE 225448

OPENS UP POSSIBILITY FOR PRACTICAL RESOLUTION OF THIS

ISSUE AND AVOIDANCE OF CONFRONTATION OVER AMOCO DRILLING
IN ITS CONCESSION AREA IN THE GULF OF SUEZ, WHICH NEITHER
OF US WANTS.

C. INCIDENT DESCRIBED CAIRO REFTEL, HOWEVER, IS TOTALLY
INCOMPATIBLE WITH APPROACH WE THOUGHT BOTH OF US WERE NOW
TAKING. WE CANNOT ACCEPT SUCH HARASSMENT BY ISRAELIS OF
AMERICAN SHIPS CARRYING OUT LEGITIMATE OPERATIONS UNDER
VALID CONCESSION AGREEMENT, EITHER AT SITE 304.1 OR AT
SITES OF ALREADY EXISTING OPERATIONS SUCH AS PLATFORM 6
OF RAMADAN FIELD. WE FIND IT INCONCEIVABLE THAT ISRAELIS
WOULD INTERFERE WITH REPLACEMENT OF MARKER BUOYS AT
EXISTING PLATFORM SITE, WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO ENSURE
SAFETY OF NAVIGATION.

D. WE HAVE AGREED THAT NEW ACTIVITY SHOULD BE LIMITED
TO SITE 304.1 PENDING US-ISRAELI TALKS ON THIS WHOLE
QUESTION. BUT SUCH TALKS CANNOT BE PRODUCTIVE IN FACE OF
HARASSMENT AND INTERFERENCE WITH AMOCO OPERATIONS, SUCH AS
THOSE DESCRIBED REFTEL, WHICH ARE GOING ON IN AREAS ALREADY
UNDER PRODUCTION AND TO WHICH ISRAELIS HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY
OBJECTED.
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